



**Kristi Hager** is a print-maker, painter, photographer, performance artist and spoken-word poet from Missoula who has many talents. She received a BA in Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

She is perhaps best known regionally for producing and directing both the live performance and video of the 2000 *Cool Water Hula*, a performance art event that is now celebrating its tenth-year anniversary. Of that endeavor, she says, “Going out on a limb with that performance took me out of the studio and into grade schools, a high school, hospitals, rural libraries, a state literacy conference, public radio, You Tube, and collaboration with a twelve foot puppet.”

The review panel felt that Kristi represents an “incredibly dedicated artist.” They responded to the multi-dynamic aspects of her art and creativity, saying “the way she uses multi-media changes the way we look at things.”

Kristi says, “Paint simple things for five years and you will learn to paint. The first fifteen years of my life as an artist were guided by these words from my painting mentor, Gordon Cook. I took the directive seriously and became a good painter. I received awards, taught at universities and exhibited nationally. These years of discipline were critical to learning the next big lesson: getting really good at one thing gives you confidence to do whatever needs to be done. I include these early guiding principles because they prepared me to take on the next challenge required of a mature artist who wants to do innovative work.”